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### **Fighting for New York**

Rep. Steve Israel has been an advocate on behalf of New York service members and military families throughout his tenure in Congress. He served for four years on the House Armed Services Committee and has made nine visits to Iraq and Afghanistan, most recently visiting in Iraq in May 2011.

### **Homeland Security**

#### *Federal Funding*

Rep. Israel is working to ensure that New York continues to get its fair share of homeland security funding. In early 2011, House Republicans passed major cuts to important homeland security grant programs, including the Urban Area Securities Initiative, which is intend to help secure the highest risk cities. Together with Rep. Nita Lowey of New York, Rep. Israel was able to amend the Republican bill to ensure the highest risk cities would still receive adequate funding. Reps. Israel and Lowey also introduced legislation to make this change to the program permanent.

As a member of the House Appropriations Committee, Rep. Israel successfully fought Bush's budget cuts to first responder and port security grant programs that are vital to the security of New York. In 2008, Rep. Israel brought the Chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security Rep. David Price to New York City. Israel and Price toured the city with NYPD and Homeland Security officials to study the city and surrounding communities' national security needs.

#### *Shoulder-Fired Missiles*

Rep. Israel has also led the fight in the House to increase U.S. efforts to counter the threat of shoulder fired missiles. Developed more than thirty years ago to protect small groups of ground troops from air assaults, shoulder-fired missiles (also known as MANPADS, or MAN Portable

Air Defense Systems) have proved highly effective at targeting aircraft. The ability of terrorists to accurately target aircraft from as far as three miles away makes it very difficult to protect against the deadly weapons. Reports from the intelligence community, the State Department, and other government agencies indicate that shoulder-fired missiles have hit dozens of civilian aircraft since the 1970s and killed hundreds of people worldwide. They accounted for most of the planes brought down in the first Gulf War and are responsible for a number of shoot-downs in the current war in Iraq.

Rep. Israel wrote original legislation that would equip American-flagged commercial jets with enhanced anti-missile countermeasures. In response, in 2008, the Department of Homeland Security created a pilot program to install anti-missile technologies on commercial jets. The program will study how the anti-missile jammers work on aircraft as they travel from New York to California.

### Defense Policy

#### *Iraq & Afghanistan*



Rep. Israel has made multiple visits to Iraq and Afghanistan to meet with U.S. Armed Forces and top military commanders. In May 2011, he visited Iraq as part of a bipartisan Congressional Delegation trip to assess progress on redeployment, thank the troops serving in the region, and to meet with Iraqi and U.S. officials. In December 2009, he visited Afghanistan to meet with General Stanley McChrystal, the Commander of U.S. Forces Afghanistan, to discuss U.S. strategy and policy for Afghanistan.

#### *Defense Industry Jobs*

Long Island has a proud tradition dating back to World War II of building the jets, tanks, ships and other equipment our men and women in uniform rely on. The defense industry remains a major employer on Long Island, and Rep. Israel is working hard to keep those jobs. Rep. Israel has advocated for programs like the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, the Abrams tank, and the *Virginia*

-class submarine, which contribute millions of dollars to Long Island's economy each year.

### *Professional Military Education*

Rep. Israel has been working since his time on the House Armed Services Committee to increase the military's commitment to widespread professional military education, which is the continuing development of service members and military leaders while they are in the Armed Forces. Rep. Israel successfully worked to pass several important amendments on military education to the 2007 Defense Authorization Bill. His efforts have helped an increased number of service members get training and education on linguistics, cultural awareness, regional expertise, military history, demographics and more.

### **Helpful Links**

- [Department of Homeland Security](#)
- [Department of Defense](#)
- [Morrelly Homeland Security Center on Long Island](#)